

Washington, DC - Congressman Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) released the following statement today after questioning Toyota USA President and Chief Operating Officer James E. Lentz. Braley is vice-chairman of the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

"I'm extremely concerned and disappointed by Toyota's and NHTSA's delayed and insufficient responses to this deadly problem," Braley said in a statement submitted for the record. "Even though Toyota has recalled millions of vehicles and stopped the sale and production of eight models involved in the latest recall, I remain concerned that the company and the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration have not gone far enough to get to the root of the problem and ensure the safety of Toyota products, and concerned that there may be dangerous Toyota vehicles still on the road today.

"According to NHTSA, in the past decade 34 people have died in crashes alleged to have been caused by sudden unintended acceleration in Toyota vehicles. These alarming numbers should have spurred Toyota and NHTSA to aggressively investigate and fix any problems in Toyota vehicles. Instead, the company appears to have engaged in denial and blaming drivers for the problems, and NHTSA appears to have conducted only preliminary, inadequate, and ineffective investigations.

"I know that local Toyota dealers in Iowa have been working hard to repair recalled vehicles and serve their customers well. However, we will not be able to truly fix these problems without thorough and credible investigations that definitively identify the problem and the solution to the problem.

"I am pleased that Mr. Lentz acknowledged Toyota has additional work to do to get to the bottom of problems involving the electronic throttle control system and I look forward to working with the Committee to get answers to these critical questions."

Since 2000, NHTSA has received 2,600 complaints of sudden unintended acceleration in Toyota vehicles, as well as six defect petitions requesting investigations.